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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/780,767	02/19/2004	Keisuke Wakabayashi	040302-0383	2070

22428 7590 06/29/2007  
FOLEY AND LARDNER LLP  
SUITE 500  
3000 K STREET NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20007

EXAMINER
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MAPLES, JOHN S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1745

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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06/29/2007

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/780,767	<b>Applicant(s)</b> WAKABAYASHI, KEISUKE	
	<b>Examiner</b> John S. Maples	<b>Art Unit</b> 1745	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 April 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 ~~is/are~~ are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 3 is/~~are~~ withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2 and 4-13 ~~is/are~~ are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

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1. Claim 3 is withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. (New Rejection)

Claim 12 sets forth the predetermined time as a value calculated "before measuring the electric conductivity of the water circulating in the circulating flow path". This is incorrect because claim 1 recites the predetermined value by measuring the electric conductivity. Amendment of this claim is required to align it with the language of claim 1.

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-11, 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fuji-JP-09-231990. (Fuji)

Reference is made to the English language abstract to Fuji along with the machine translation of this document. Fuji discloses a circulating supply water system

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for a fuel cell that includes a pump and ion exchange filters that clean the water therein and which further includes an electric conductivity sensor indicating when the electric conductivity exceeds a certain level, the filters require renewal. It is noted that the claimed predetermined time is when the electric conductivity exceeds such a level. In addition, the steps in claims 4-7, 11 and 13 are inherently met by the teachings of Fuji. For example, the initial electric conductivity in claim 4 is met by the initial electric conductivity in Fuji before the pump therein is started. With regard to claim 5, a steady-state of electric conductivity is not reached because the same is constantly changing. In claim 6, the predetermined time will be shorter when the electric conductivity is smaller, and so forth.

Applicant's arguments have all been considered but are not deemed persuasive. First of all, it is noted that applicant has not specifically argued that point by the examiner that the claimed predetermined time in Fuji is when the electric conductivity in the system exceeds a certain level. In other words, when the certain conductivity level is reached in Fuji, this is the time when the ion exchange material is renewed. This time in Fuji meets the claimed subject matter as currently claimed.

It is also noted that applicant has used the word "when" in the arguments at the bottom of page 5 of the recent amendment, which word denotes a time, which language applicant is specifically claiming in the claimed subject matter and which is met by the teachings of Fuji.

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Applicant argues that the limitations of claims 4, 5 and 9 are not met by the "predetermined time" of Fuji. For the reasons set forth previously in this action, these arguments have been properly traversed.

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fuji in view of Kormann et al.-US 2004/0028963. (Kormann) (New Rejection)

The only claimed element not taught by Fuji is the predetermined time being the water circulating in the flow path a predetermined number of times. Kormann teaches a predetermined time for changing an ion exchange filter in a fuel cell system after a certain operating time. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in this art to have utilized a predetermined time as a number of flow path trips in the system of Fuji because of the teachings of Kormann that disclose a predetermined time according to the passage of a certain amount of time. Such is not a patentable feature in view of the above combination of references.

8. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new grounds of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

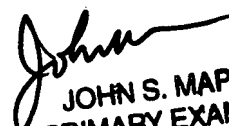
9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John S. Maples whose telephone number is 571-272-1287. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 6:15-3:45, and every other Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Ryan can be reached on 571-272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JSM/6-25-2007

  
JOHN S. MAPLES  
PRIMARY EXAMINER